

Food Notes | The Newsletter of Food for People

SPRING ISSUE 2020

The Food Bank of Humboldt County



Food for People partners with local business to cut down on food waste and generate support for our Gleaning Program. More on pg. 4-5.

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Notes from the Director

With Gratitude ...

By Anne Holcomb, Executive Director



Anne Holcomb,

We've been in the habit of doing a "gratitude exercise" at the beginning of our monthly staff meetings over the last few years, taking time to acknowledge the big and little things that other staff, volunteers or community members have done that really helped us in a tight moment, brightened our day, or inspired us. It's an exercise I always enjoy because it shifts our thinking away from being overwhelmed by the challenges and problems that arise and helps us focus on how we work together to find solutions. As we look ahead to 2020, I thought it would be nice to reflect on 2019 from that perspective. We feel blessed that there are so many to thank for our collective achievements so please forgive me if I've overlooked any individual or group!

We'd like to extend our very warmest thanks to:

- All of the donors whose financial contributions help us keep our programs and services running smoothly so that we're able to help when needed most. This includes many individuals who donate regularly as Full Plate Partners, those who give when they can throughout the year, local businesses, foundations and grant funders. Thanks to your support, we are able to pay the utility and insurance bills; purchase fuel and maintain our vehicles; service our refrigeration equipment; purchase food; and so much more.
- The high school students who rallied their friends, families and communities as they participated in the Senator McGuire Humboldt Holiday Food Drive. We were so impressed with their leadership, creativity and commitment to helping those in their community who are dealing with hunger and poverty. We can all be proud that we have such inspired leaders to carry us into the future!
- Everyone who participated as part of a Hunger Fighter Challenge team over the holidays; the children who asked for donations of food for the food bank for their birthdays instead of presents; and all of the individuals, civic groups and families who collected food on our behalf throughout the year.
- The farmers, ranchers and backyard gardeners who grew or raised nutritious local foods to share with the people we serve. This includes our friends at Locally Delicious who created and continue to support the Locally Delicious Food Fund, which contracts with local farmers at the beginning of the season to grow crops specifically for the Food Bank.
- The community and civic groups and the many individuals who raised funds to support our Backpacks for Kids program, which has no dedicated funding source and receives no government support, making it possible for us to provide weekend food packages for children who might otherwise go hungry during the school week.

staff to keep our programs strong over the course of many, many years away from school, work and retirement. They lend a hand. Collectively, they donate 1,000+ time staff positions annually!

- Local food-based businesses contribute over a million pounds of food annually to USDA commodities and other donations so that we can provide food assistance to people of all ages countywide each year.
- Media partners who help us spread the word about how to access our programs and how to get involved.
- Partners within the nonprofit sector who share information and resources to avoid duplication of effort and reach as many people as possible. Our partnerships proved especially important during the power shutdowns, and will serve us well as disaster hit Humboldt County.

We know that each of you has a story to tell about where and how you spend your time. You help create a community that we can all be proud of. We are grateful when you choose Food for People to help bring its own unique set of challenges to our community, and we appreciate the opportunity to ensure that our friends and neighbors have the food they need to stay healthy and active.

With gratitude,





Reaching Rural Hunger New Distribution Serves Klamath Area

By Carly Robbins, Development Director

Food for People's Mobile Produce Pantry Coordinator, Mike Seeber, travels around Humboldt County in a large refrigerated box truck on a monthly schedule to distribute free produce to rural and remote areas while conducting CalFresh outreach. After hearing from partners and many of the community members served by our Mobile Produce Pantry in Hoopa, Orleans and Weitchpec that folks in the Klamath area were also in need of fresh fruits and vegetables, Mike decided to see if we could help. The Klamath area is designated as a food desert and residents there experience high rates of food insecurity.

Food deserts are areas where residents' access to affordable, healthy food—especially fresh fruits and vegetables—is restricted or nonexistent due to the lack of grocery stores within convenient traveling distance.

Though Klamath, which is located in Del Norte County, is technically out of our service area we wanted to see if we could try something similar. After some coordination with local community and tribal organizations, a special pop-up distribution took place in October. Food for People provided a mix of produce that we purchased thanks to funding provided through a St. Joseph Health's Care for the Poor grant. We were able to provide a variety of staples such as potatoes, onions, carrots, and cabbage and root vegetables like beets and turnips. In one day we saw more than 56 community members come through to access fresh healthy produce—a resounding success.

Due to the success of this distribution and the confirmed need in the Klamath area, Food for People began looking for partnerships in Del Norte County to help sustain these distributions into the future. We are excited to announce that as of January we have partnered with Pacific Pantry, a part of the Community Food Council for Del Norte and Tribal Lands, to establish these as regular distributions which will occur on the third Thursday of every month from 3 to 5 pm at the Klamath Boys & Girls Club, 168 Klamath Blvd. Food for People will provide the produce and Pacific Pantry will handle the



nearly doubling the amount of people served during the pilot distribution in October!

Andrea Lanctot, the Community Outreach Coordinator with Pacific Pantry shared, "The project I work on this year, helping to coordinate the distribution in Klamath and building relationships with the Klamath Tribe is the most important to me. I grew up in Orleans and worked with the Family Extension Program in Klamath, Orleans, and Orleans, I understand the difficulties of living in these remote areas, especially when you have to travel months on wet dangerous roads. Many people don't understand the importance of having access to fresh, nutritious food for their family. Many people don't understand the importance of having access to fresh, nutritious food for their family. If this distribution can help ease the burden of food insecurity, especially during the winter, then that would be great."

Above: Food for People's Mobile Produce Pantry Coordinator, Mike Seeber prepares to load his truck with produce distributed to the Klamath area. People stand in line to receive produce while others volunteer to help. Pantry distributions like these contribute to ending food insecurity in rural areas.



Local Food Resources Coordinator Allison Kenney arranged the partnership with Humboldt Cider Company to repurpose surplus apples.



Moving Toward Zero Waste

New Craft Cider Supports Gleaning Program

By Allison Kenney, Local Food Resources Coordinator

Humboldt County is home to thousands of apple trees, many of which have been here since the days of homesteading, long before the current day generation of cannabis cultivators and organic vegetable farmers. Our gleaning program works to recover fruit excess from local backyard fruit trees and orchards and turn it into viable food sources for our clients. Due to the high volume of local apple trees, and large amount of generous donors who donate to us every year, on good apple years, or years when the fruit trees are exceptionally productive due to favorable growing conditions, we often glean more apples than we can distribute through our different programs and partner meal sites. This growing season was an exceptionally productive one for apple trees in our region, and Food for People's gleaning program brought in over 16,000 pounds of apples!

After attending a gleaning symposium conference in Seattle, and learning about a partnership between Seattle Cider Company and a gleaning organization called City Fruit, I set out to initiate a similar partnership with our very own Humboldt Cider Company. Essentially all of our gleaned apples that are either undesirable for eating—if they have holes or bruises,

sold in their taproom locations, and will come back to Food for People funds will in turn be used to benefit Food Resources programs.

Our Gleaning Program works with farmers, ranchers, and backyard gardeners to collect excess fruits, vegetables, and meats that might otherwise go to waste. We then have a market and distributes them to our clients and the Food Bank. These efforts bring in over 100,000 pounds of excess produce and meat last year. Our new partnership with Food for People's Local Food Recovery Program brings in over 100,000 pounds of food a year, saving local businesses money and diverting up to half a million pounds of food from the landfill.

This partnership with Humboldt Cider Company is a creative approach to using fruit surplus to achieve zero waste. It also provides a great opportunity for further developing our program and helping to reduce food waste in our community.



Donate online | www.foodforpeople.org

Above: Food for People's cider is made of locally grown Gravenstein and Tom Hart apples. Tom Hart, owner of Hart, Kenney, and Hart Cider Company, empties apples for a new batch of cider. Right: Tom Hart, Kenney, and Hart Cider Company owner Tom Hart, left, and his wife, Kristin, right, help prepare cider for the Humboldt Holiday Food Drive.



Humboldt Holiday Food Drive

Senator & Local High School Students Help for the Holidays



Thanks to Senator Jones and his team, the Humboldt Holiday Food Drive was a success.

As part of the Humboldt Holiday Food Drive, local school students worked hard this year to can and non-perishable food items. This year nearly 22,000 cans were collected, and more than \$5,000 was donated. This success is thanks to the hard work of local school students who have been working on this project for months and the support of the community.



Food for People

The Food Bank for
Humboldt County

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Mike Seeber, *Mobile Produce Pantry Coordinator*



Members of HSU's Brothers United help pack bags of food at our December Second Saturday Volunteer Day.



Volunteer with Us!

The rain didn't stop dozens of volunteers from spending the second Saturday of December at our Eureka warehouse, sorting and packing donated holiday food drive items during our monthly Second Saturday Volunteer Day.

After a brief welcome, volunteers got to work unloading boxes and packing food bags for our programs.

Volunteers at the December event included families, high school students and HSU's Brothers United, a cultural club for Black men. Thank you to everyone who braved the rain and helped support our programs — our work wouldn't be possible without you!

Volunteering is a family-friendly way to give back, meet like-minded people and learn more about the work we do at Food for People.

If you are interested in volunteer



**Dozens o
rain to he**



Donate online | www.foodforpeople.org

Volunteer Senior Delivery Driver Mike helps unpack long-time program participant and friend Mary.

Power Shut-Offs in Humboldt

The Impact on Local Seniors

By Heidi McHugh, Community Education & Outreach Coordinator

The mad rush for ice, gasoline, batteries, and shelf-stable food began around 3 p.m. on Oct. 8, 2019. Residents of Humboldt County had received official word that Pacific Gas and Electric would be shutting off the power before midnight as a safety precaution in the face of predicted high winds that could pose a fire danger. That evening lines for gas spilled out for blocks and finding a store with ice was less likely than spotting Bigfoot. The generators that were in stock had sold out before sunset. Some community members were lucky enough to already be prepared for the event and did not have to venture out into the chaos. But others, like some of the older adults served through Food for People's Senior Programs, could not because they are homebound or did not have the resources to purchase emergency supplies.

Without phone or internet, Food for People's staff was limited in our ability to operate on Oct. 9th. We set up distribution in the Eureka Choice Pantry and dealt with the food that was not going to survive the loss of refrigeration. When power and phone service was restored we wanted to check in on our senior and homebound clients to see how they were doing. What we heard was distressing. We heard repeatedly about the cold because furnaces are ignited electrically for many. People with electrical medical equipment were concerned about their health conditions. One woman with a CPAP machine for sleep apnea told me how she had to attempt to sleep upright in her easy chair. The ordeal made her extremely anxious and triggered her Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. One woman told me of her difficulty breathing when the power went out because she had a condition where she could not breath unless she was upright.

because what they had was spoiled.

Food for People's Homebound Program depends on volunteer drivers. Mike Vitiello has been delivering food to homebound people for nearly 20 years. He drives for his clients, who is blind and lives alone in a rural area during the blackout. He took the initiative and drove to the store. His instincts were good; her perishable food was still good. He managed to find ice and brought it back to her. She had what was salvageable from her refrigerator. She was grateful for the help and appreciated the new placement of her refrigerator. She said she had more than Mike had available, but if he didn't come, she would have nothing.

"Legitimately, for someone like Mary, it's a really big deal, both physically and emotionally. She's a homebound senior; she just needs some help. She doesn't have anyone to get their back. Just having someone there to help her is an amazing thing in this world." He emphasized that seniors with disabilities should have what they need to stay safe and healthy. "If someone like her had a generator, it would be simple. I've had people who relied on me for their power and my delivery route in the past, but not now. There should be funding to supply them with generators."

Mike's concerns are shared by many. In response to the impact of the planned power shut-offs on low-income, disabled, and elderly people, a coalition of organizations including the Center on Law and Poverty and the California Food Policy Advocates are calling on state lawmakers to require that Food Banks are educating state lawmakers and the public about the impact of those who cannot respond to an emergency. The coalition is asking for a bill to be introduced in the state legislature to require that the state's utility regulators consider the impact of power outages on low-income, disabled, and elderly people.

Tribute & Memorial Contributions

Honor a friend or family member by making a donation to Food for People. Simply add a memo to your gift. If you include an address, we'll send a card to let them know about the donation. It is a great way to celebrate and/or honor the memory of someone you love.

In Honor Of

Amanda & Staff at CVS
 Ann Anderson & Susan Hoffman
 Anthony Lucchesi
 Ashley Skiles' Birthday
 Berget Jelane
 Betty Chin & Edie Jenson
 Beverly Ann Hood's Birthday
 Bill Carsner
 Bud & Missy
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 Dave Mulhern
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 Edge Gerring's Birthday
 Emily Mason
 Erich Schimpf
 Erika Makino
 Errol Comma
 Faye & Darman Willard
 Fred Nevers
 HSU Football
 Hugh Scanlon & Sharon Levy

In Memory Of

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 April Conant
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 The Sterk Family
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 Tom Davies
 Troy & Ken Dean
 Trudy Keltz
 All the amazing Farmers who participated in the 2019 Grow Off!
 All the staff & volunteers at Food for People" doing the hard work every day"

Leonard Agnew
 Liz Hamilton
 Marc Jones
 Margaret Cowley
 Mario & Jane Brenta
 Patrick Conlin
 Paul Monahan
 Peggy Douglas
 Ram Dass
 Ray Fisher
 Rebecca Edwards
 Robert James Titus
 Rose Kotarski
 Sam G



Backpack Sponsor a Backpack a Child

By Carrie Smith, Children's Programs Coordinator

As Food for People's Children's Programs Coordinator for the past six years, I supply food to children who are dependent on school meals in our community. It's an unfortunate reality that many children who depend on school meals for their daily food intake. The Backpacks for Kids Program supplies weekend food bags to kids so they can feed children during the times when schools are closed and may not get enough to eat to last through the week.

The Backpacks for Kids Program works closely with school personnel to identify students at risk of going hungry over the weekend. During the school year, participating students receive kid-friendly meals and snacks including bread, fruit, peanut butter, tuna, soups, granola bars and 100% fruit juice. These meals are determined by availability, USDA guidelines and parents' and children's expressed needs.

Last year, we served nearly 1,000 backpacks during the school year, and plan to reach even more this year. We serve children at sites in Eureka, Orick, Lakeport, Ferndale, Hoopa, Samoa, Arcata, Hydesville, Carlotta, Rio Dell, and surrounding areas. Many of the children who participated in last year's program had kind thoughts: "I like the [food bag] because it has lots of food and we never know when we're going to eat again," and "Sometimes we're out of food on the weekends."

Children are our future and we must ensure they have the nutrition they need to learn and grow. Our children, in turn, will grow to be productive adults who have a better understanding and appreciation for the challenges faced by people in our community.

Advocacy Corner

SNAP Changes Affect the Poorest Americans

By Heidi McHugh, Community Education & Outreach Coordinator

On December 4, 2019 the federal government issued a rule in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or CalFresh) that will cut off food assistance for nearly 700,000 of the nation's poorest adults. Those affected are referred to as able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWD). An ABAWD is a SNAP participant age 18 through 49 with no minor children in the household. These adults are among the poorest in the nation, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) data. Their average income is just 18% of the federal poverty line. Their average monthly SNAP benefits are about \$165 per month. Most working-age adults on SNAP who can work, do so. Unfortunately, low-paying jobs with unreliable hours and little to no benefits are all too common. At the time of the announcement, the Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services estimated that 3,606 Humboldt County residents who receive benefits through the program may be impacted by the change.

A longstanding provision of SNAP limits an ABAWD to just three months of benefits over the course of three years, if they are not employed for at least 20 hours a week. A provision of the law also allows states to seek waivers of this three-month cut-off for areas where insufficient jobs are available. From the rule's enactment in 1996 until now, both Democratic and Republican presidents alike have operated under a common set of criteria in granting these waivers. This provision allows states to respond to high unemployment and economic uncertainty caused by recessions, events such as natural disasters, and regional shifts in employment opportunities.

Thirty-six states currently have waivers for parts of their states where unemployment is highest. All of California was under waiver until September 1, 2018. The rule issued on December 4th will dramatically reduce states' ability to be eligible for these waivers.

The enforcement of the ABAWD rule does not improve the circumstances of the impacted individuals. Research has shown that work requirements have resulted in little or no long-term increase in earnings and employment and have caused many families to lose assistance, leaving them in deep poverty.

Andrew Cheyne, director of government affairs for the California Association of Food Banks says of the rule, "It's grounded in the myth that people receiving food assistance are 'lazy' and don't want to work. Nothing could be further from the truth: the people impacted by this rule have been systematically disenfranchised and face real barriers to maintaining and documenting full-time employment. Taking away basic food assistance only makes people hungry, and does not help anyone find a job."

More than half of SNAP households with at least one working-age, non-disabled adult work while receiving SNAP. Because people often participate in SNAP when they are

between jobs, work rates are high, and more than 80% of SNAP households are working or the year after receiving SNAP.

The mandate to work 20 hours a week to be SNAP eligible does not take into account that many SNAP workers often juggle irregular work schedules to make ends meet. Seven in ten respondents to Food for People & Pantry Services Survey 2018 reported working part-time, seasonal, or occasional jobs. Barriers in rural communities like lack of reliable transportation make employment challenging. Sixty percent of respondents reported having sporadic or rare transportation needs. This is important because on paper, someone may not be an ABAWD, but they may have a chronic condition or disability that may prevent them from working.

"It's grounded in the myth that people receiving food assistance are 'lazy' and don't want to work. Nothing could be further from the truth."

The shortage of healthcare in rural areas of Humboldt County contributes to why many ABAWDs are limited in their ability to work. Many are caregivers for ill family members or young children.

This new amplification of the work requirement will add administrative burdens and raise costs for already cash-strapped funded state and county agencies. Furthermore, these new changes will limit the SNAP program to respond to natural disasters. Most of the country worked during and after the Great Recession. Participants who can work, do work through a charitable food organization (Feeding America).

Organizations like Food for People have resources to fill this meal gap. Targeted outreach to people who are in between jobs, caring for children with undiagnosed disabilities will help people find employment, but it will increase the risk of employment-related illness and diet-related illness.

A Culinary Trip To Italy Nutrition Education

By Kayla Watkins



Recently our clients had the opportunity to experience the food culture of Italy via volunteer Chef Anne Harris and her husband Mark Harris in Food for People's Cooking with Commodities class. This dynamic duo recently traveled to Italy to expand their culinary skills as well as enrich their food culture. They were excited to share the experience of homemade traditional pasta making with our class.

This enriching tradition has intrigued and changed the way our clients view and eat pasta. We completed the meal with a beautiful array of vegetables for pasta primavera and accompanied it with a rainbow of fruits jazzed up with a caramelized orange sauce (recipe below).

Look for upcoming cooking classes on our Facebook page at facebook.com/FoodforPeopleInc.



Anne and Mark Harris demonstrate homemade pasta in a recent Cooking with Commodities class.

CARMELIZED ORANGE SAUCE

Directions:

1. Zest the oranges into thin, long strips.
2. Boil the water, add the zest and continue to boil for 3 minutes. Drain the zest in a strainer, rinse with cold water and set aside.
3. Melt the butter in a saucepan over medium heat. Using a wooden spatula, stir in about 1/3 of the orange juice and the sugar. Continue to cook over medium heat adding a small amount of juice to prevent crystallization.
4. Once the sugar is dissolved, turn the heat to medium high, and stir occasionally until the mixture turns golden amber.
5. When the sugar mixture is golden amber, add the zest and continue cooking for a few more minutes.

Ingredients:

3 large oranges
with juice

1/4 stick butter

1/3 cup sugar

2-3 cups water

2019 Hunger Fighter Champ



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2019 Hunger Fighter Teams

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**Thank you to everyone who joined us to fight local hunger and help
2019 Holiday Food & Fund Drive a success!**

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